



Why do I need to get a flu vaccine every year?

You should get vaccinated every year because:

- The protection you get from the vaccine only lasts for the current flu season.
- The flu vaccine is updated each year to include the viruses expected to be the most common during the upcoming flu season.

How do I know flu vaccine is safe?

The flu vaccine has an excellent safety record. About 100 million doses are given in the United States each year to protect people during flu season. Serious side effects are extremely rare.

Find out more.

For more information, visit: www.doh.wa.gov/flu

For help finding an immunization clinic, call:



WithinReach Family Health Hotline
1-800-322-2588 (711 TTY relay)
 or www.ParentHelp123.org



Washington State Department of

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If you have a disability and need this document in another format, please call 1-800-322-2588 (711-TTY relay).

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Protect your family from the flu



The **Flu vaccine** is the best way to protect yourself, your family, and others from the flu. Call your doctor today for an appointment.





Influenza (flu)

spreads easily by coughing and sneezing. Flu most often causes fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, and headache. Flu can also lead to hospitalization and death.

This is especially true for

babies, young children, pregnant women, people with certain medical conditions, and older adults.

Even healthy people can get very sick from the flu. People can spread it to others before they know they're sick. Getting vaccinated each year is the best way to protect yourself from getting and spreading the flu.

Who should get the flu vaccine?

Everyone six months and older should get a yearly flu vaccine, especially those who are at high risk, such as:

- Anyone with asthma, diabetes, heart disease, lung diseases, or other chronic illnesses.
- Young children.
- Pregnant women and women who recently gave birth.
- Anyone living with or caring for:
 - Children, especially babies under six months and children with special healthcare needs.
 - Those with a weakened immune system.



There are two types of flu vaccine

The nasal spray: for anyone 2 to 49 years who is healthy and not pregnant.

The flu shot: for anyone six months and older.

With either vaccine, children younger than nine years may need two doses in the same flu season. Ask your doctor or nurse which vaccine is best for your family and if your child will need two doses.

Flu vaccine does NOT cause the flu

Some people may feel slightly feverish or achy for one to two days while their immune system responds to the vaccine. This is not the flu, it's a sign the vaccine is working. Immunize your family as soon as vaccine is available. It takes about two weeks after vaccination to be protected. Protection lasts throughout the flu season. If you get vaccinated but still get the flu, you'll likely have a milder or shorter illness.

Healthy habits also help stop the spread of flu

- Get vaccinated each year!
- Cover your cough! Cough or sneeze into a tissue or your upper sleeve, NOT your bare hand. Be sure to throw the tissue away.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water is not available, use alcohol-based hand gel or disposable wipes.
- Keep your hands away from your face.
- Call your doctor or nurse if you have a fever or cough that won't go away.
- Stay home and away from other people when you or your children are sick.



Get vaccinated. Stop the flu.